Maryland 4-H Code of Animal Science Ethics

Exhibitors of animals (beef, dairy, goat, horse, poultry, rabbit, sheep, dog, and swine), at all animal science activities and events shall at all times conduct themselves with honesty and good sportsmanship. Their conduct shall always reflect the highest standards of honor and dignity to promote the advancement of agricultural education. This code applies to all 4-H'ers who participate in structured classes of competition and animal science activities and events in 4-H. This code applies to all animals offered in any animal science activity, event, or show.

All youth leaders (including parents and MCE Volunteers) working with 4-H exhibitors is under an affirmative responsibility to do more than avoid improper conduct or questionable acts. Their moral values must be so certain and positive that those younger and more pliable will be influenced by their fine example. Owners who violate the code of animal science ethics will forfeit premiums, awards, and auction proceeds and may be prohibited from future participation. 4-H Exhibitors who violate this code of ethics demean the integrity of all animal exhibitors.

Infractions will be reviewed by a 4-H Board of Review, on the local or state level, as appropriate to the event in question and may be subject to a fair oversight committee. In addition, some acts may be subject to review of the State 4-H Office based upon the 4-H Behavioral Expectations (4-H 418) and/or MCE policies.

The following is a list of standards for all exhibitors and all animals in competitive events and activities:

1. All exhibitors must present, upon request of fair and livestock officials, proof of ownership, length of ownership, and age of all animals owned. Misrepresentation of ownership, identity of animal, age, or any facts relating thereto is prohibited.
2. Owners shall provide animal health certificates from licensed veterinarians upon request by fair or animal officials.
3. 4-H exhibitors are expected to care for and groom their animals while at fairs or animal science activities and events.
4. Animals shall be presented to activities and events, where they will enter the food chain, free of drugs. The act of entering an animal in an animal show, activity, or event is giving the consent by the owner for event management to obtain any specimens of urine, saliva, blood, or other substance from the animal to be used in testing. Animals entered shall not be administered drugs other than in accordance with applicable federal, state, and provincial statutes, regulations and rules. Animals shall not be exhibited if the drugs administered in accordance with federal, state, and provincial statutes, regulations and rules affect the animal's performance or appearance at the event.

   If the laboratory report on the chemical analysis of saliva, urine, blood, or other sample, taken from livestock, indicates the presence of forbidden drugs or medication, this shall be prima facie evidence such substance has been administered to the animal either internally or externally. It is presumed that the sample of urine, saliva, blood or other substance tested by the approved laboratory to which it is sent is the one taken from the animal in question, its integrity is preserved, and all procedures of said collection and preservation, transfer to the laboratory and analysis of the sample are correct and accurate and the report received from the laboratory pertains to the sample taken from the animal in question and correctly reflects the condition of the animal at the time the sample was taken, with the burden on the owner to prove otherwise at any review in regard to the matter conducted by the fair or livestock event or 4-H. At any time after an animal arrives on the fair or animal science event premises, a licensed veterinarian shall administer all treatments involving the use of drugs and/or medications.
5. Any surgical procedure or injection of any foreign substance or drug or the external application of any substance (irritant, counter irritant, or similar substance) which could affect the animal's performance or alter its natural contour, conformation, or appearance, except external applications of substances to the hoofs or horns of animals which affect appearance only and except for surgical procedures performed by a duly licensed veterinarian for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the animal, is prohibited.
6. Using ice, ice packs, cold packs, or cold compresses, internally or externally, other than those prescribed to relieve heat stress or a medical condition as diagnosed by a duly licensed veterinarian for the sole purpose of protecting the health of the animal, is prohibited.
7. Hair removal, clipping or shaving of hair on hogs (Market and Breeding), or evidence thereof, besides ears, tails, and underline is prohibited.
8. The use of showing and/or handling devices such as striking animals to cause swelling, using electrical contrivance, or other similar practices, are not acceptable and are prohibited.
9. Direct criticism or interference with the judge, fair, or animal show management, other exhibitors, breed representatives, or show officials before, during, or after the event is prohibited. In the furtherance of their official duty, all judges, fair and animal management, or other event officials shall be treated with courtesy, cooperation, and respect and no person shall direct abusive or threatening conduct toward them or exhibitors participating in the activity. For disciplinary procedures, please refer to 4-H 418.
10. No owner shall violate this Code of Ethics or conspire with another person or persons to intentionally violate this code of ethics or knowingly contribute or cooperate with another person or persons either by affirmative action or inaction to violate this code of ethics. Violation of this rule shall subject such individual to disciplinary action.
11. The application of this code of ethics provides for absolute responsibility for an animal's condition to the owner whether or not he or she was actually instrumental in or had actual knowledge of the treatment of the animal in contravention of this code of ethics.
12. The act of entering an animal is the giving of consent by the owner, parent, or guardian to have any disciplinary action taken by the fair or animal science event for violation of this Code of Animal Science Ethics and any other rules of competition of the fair or animal science event without recourse against the fair, animal science event, or 4-H. The act of entering an animal is the giving of consent that any proceedings or disciplinary action taken by the fair or animal event may be published with the name of the violator or violators in any publication of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions, including Fairs and Expositions and any special notices to members.
13. The act of signing this form and/or entering of an animal in a fair or animal event or activity is the giving of verification by the owner that he or she has read the **Maryland 4-H Code of Animal Science Ethics** and understands the consequences of and penalties provided for actions prohibited by the code. It is further consented that any action, which contravenes these rules, and is also in violation of federal, state, or provincial statutes, regulations, or rules may be released to appropriate law enforcement authorities with jurisdiction over such infractions.

Exhibitor Entry Statement

I have read, understood, and, in consideration of being to able to exhibit, or participate in Maryland 4-H Animal Events, consent to and agree to abide by the Maryland 4-H Code of Animal Science Ethics. I understand this statement must be signed annually and will be on file in the local 4-H office and will apply to all 4-H animal science activities and events for that year. By not signing, one may not receive all associated materials and will not be eligible to exhibit in the current year.

4-H Member Signature (Owner) Date	Printed Name of 4-H Member
Guardian or Parent of the above Signatory Date	Printed name of Guardian or Parent of the above Signatory

This Code of Ethics has been adapted from the IAFE Code of Show Ring Ethics; LMH; JWS; JWL 2001; JWL2002; JWL 2007. Approved by DA 2007.